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As the sizes of the young were apparently the same and no other duck with young was seen in the vicinity, we naturally assumed these were the missing two from the flock. After photographing, we returned these two to the small pond occupied by the female and it was noted that the female immediately began pecking at the two new arrivals. Upon a later observation of the group, we found that the female had only six young, instead of eight, she evidently having driven the two young away from the flock.

At least two explanations are possible regarding the occurrence of these two small young. They may have been separated from their own brood and joined the flock in which we found them, or it is possible Merganser eggs were deposited in the nest of the Buffle-head and hatched. The latter explanation seems the more probable to us on account of the juveniles corresponding in size with the others. It is not uncommon to find eggs of different varieties of ground-nesting ducks in the same nest and, no doubt, the same holds true of tree-nesting varieties as well.

Regarding the occurrence of the male Buffle-head, this bird was flushed from the bay before we were aware of the presence of the female and young. The male returned and was flushed at least twice thereafter from this small bay, and while he showed no particular solicitation for the young, it seemed obvious that he was the parent bird. In any event, he showed a decided preference for the small section of water occupied by the female and young.—JULES LABARTHE, *San Francisco, February 6, 1922.*

## EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The award of the Brewster Memorial Medal for 1920-21 has been made by the American Ornithologists' Union to Robert Ridgway in recognition of his successful labors on the "Birds of North and Middle America." Every ornithologist will heartily approve of the decision of the committee in charge of the award, that volume VIII of this great work was the most meritorious publication on the birds of America which appeared during the last two-year period.

On January 17, 1922, in response to an invitation from Mr. Charles L. Whittle, Mr. L. B. Fletcher, and others interested in the banding of birds, over 100 persons met at the Boston Society of Natural History Building in Boston and organized a new ornithological society to be known as the New England Bird Banding Association. The meeting was addressed by Mr. S. Prentiss Baldwin, of Cleveland, who during the last six years, by introducing bird-trapping as a means of banding birds, has done so much to show the scientific possibilities of the work. The Bureau of Biological Survey was represented by Mr. E. A. Goldman who spoke of the Bureau's plans in connection with the movement, strongly endorsing the organization of the new association and recommending the formation of other organizations of the same character at appropriate localities in the United States and Canada. Over 300 members are already enrolled in the new organization.

It is becoming increasingly incumbent upon active workers in any field of science to keep up with the times. Each one of us must know the literature appearing in his field. An indispensable aid to every serious

worker is the Zoological Record, published by the Zoological Society of London (Regent's Park). Mr. W. L. Sclater is editor of the "Aves" portion, the annual subscription to which is seven shillings six pence. The publication of the Zoological Record has been continuous throughout the war period, owing to local provision. But now, with greatly increased printing costs, it can be continued on the same plane of completeness only with outside support as well. It is a cooperative enterprise; hence the propriety of this suggestion that each Condor reader who is also a serious student in ornithology contribute to its maintenance by subscribing, at least to the extent intimated above.

The department of zoology of the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, has been completely reorganized under the direction of Dr. Wilfred H. Osgood, Curator of that department. In the division of birds, Dr. C. E. Hellmayr has been secured as Associate Curator, Mr. John T. Zimmer as Assistant Curator, Mr. Colin Sanborn as Assistant, and Mr. Boardman Conover as Associate. In the division of birds' eggs Mr. R. M. Barnes is Assistant Curator. In the division of mammals Mr. Edmund Heller has been made Assistant Curator. Messrs. Heller and Zimmer are about to leave for an extended period of vertebrate collecting in Peru.

Mr. A. S. Kibbe has recently made some comments in *The Gull* (organ of the Audubon Association of the Pacific) anent bird trapping and banding which to our minds deserve serious consideration. He says: "Trapping is not a diversion nor a spas-

modic pastime, but a business, with well defined duties and responsibilities. A bird trap must not be used like a mouse trap, to be baited and set and left to itself until one happens to think of it again. Bird traps should be open to constant observation and must be visited regularly and frequently, because: (1) birds of certain species will not submit to the trap but will kill themselves in efforts to escape; (2) birds that do not object to the confinement may nevertheless quarrel and injure or kill each other; (3) birds that you wish to protect and save may be killed by the other birds or by rats trapped with them; (4) birds are liable to be killed by exposure in traps overnight. . . . Trap and band, if you are competent and willing and able to do it properly; . . . but do not, yourself, nor permit anyone else to, bring terror or destruction to those birds that our Association is pledged to protect."

## COMMUNICATION

### THE BIOLOGICAL SURVEY BIRD COUNTS

To the Editor of THE CONDOR:

The Biological Survey began in 1914 to collect data on the numerical distribution of bird life in the United States. By such information, which is gained through counts made by volunteer collaborators, of the birds breeding on selected areas, it is possible to gain some knowledge of the yearly fluctuations in bird life and of the effect the present State and Federal laws may have on the increase of game and insectivorous birds. During the earlier years we received a very gratifying response to our request for assistance, but during the war many persons were unable to continue the work and interest in it has seemed to wane. It is desirable that these counts should be repeated on a large scale through a period of years in order that adequate data may be accumulated to make possible definite conclusions. Any one thoroughly familiar with the breeding birds of his vicinity can do this work, and will find it growing in interest from year to year. We are therefore again appealing to the readers of THE CONDOR in the hope that all who are able to do so will make one or more bird counts this summer.

The general plan of this work is to select a tract of land containing from 40 to 80 acres and representing as nearly as possible the average conditions for the vicinity. Some day, during the height of the breeding season, this land should be carefully gone over in the early morning and the male birds counted, which at that season are usu-

ally in full song and may be considered each to represent a breeding pair. The result of this count should be checked subsequently to be sure that all birds counted nest within the selected area, and that none have been missed. The count should not be made until the spring migration is over and the birds are settled on their nesting grounds. In the latitude of Washington, D. C., the best time for the first count is about the first of June; in New England and the northern states probably about June 10; and south of Washington, during the latter part of May.

Anyone who is willing to do this work is requested to send his name and address to the Biological Survey, Washington, D. C. Full directions for making a count and report blanks will be sent in time for plans to be made before the actual time for the field work. Since the Bureau has no funds with which to pay for this work, it must depend on the services of voluntary observers.

An added impetus should be given to this work at the present time by the report that the British ornithologists are contemplating a census of the birds of the British Isles, planned along the same lines as our own.

Very truly yours,

E. W. NELSON,  
CHIEF, BIOLOGICAL SURVEY, Washington,  
D. C., February 1, 1922.

## MINUTES OF COOPER CLUB MEETINGS

### SOUTHERN DIVISION

OCTOBER.—The regular monthly meeting of the Southern Division, Cooper Ornithological Club, was held at the Los Angeles Museum at 8 P. M., October 27, 1921. President Dickey was in the chair, with others present as follows: Messrs. Appleton, Barnes, Brown, Chambers, Hanaford, Howell, Lamb, Little, Miller, Pierce, Rich, van Rossem, Taylor, Warmer, Wyman; Mesdames Hall, Schneider and Warmer, and Misses Beers, Burnell, Germain and Kennedy. Mrs. Beers, Mrs. van Rossem and Miss Martin were visitors.

Minutes of September meeting were read and approved. The following new names were presented: Benjamin W. King, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, by H. J. Rust; Mabel M. Lawrence, Los Angeles, by Wright M. Pierce; Harry Rae Van Cleve, Los Angeles, by Dr. Warmer; James Norris Proctor, Santa Paula, by J. O. Snyder; Mrs. Aurelia B. Ferguson, Los Angeles, by Mrs. Bicknell. The Northern Division sent the name of Mrs. Sara S. Boyle, Berkeley.

Business Manager Chambers announced